

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

BUREAU OF THE MINT,

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 20, 1890.

O. C. Eosbyshell, Esq.,
Superintendent, U. S. Mint,
Philadelphia, Penna.

Sir:

I am anxious that your mint should come up to the standard of the other mints,- indeed there is no reason why it should not elevate the standard,- in regard to the number of good pieces produced from ingots operated upon by the Coiner, especially silver.

You will notice from my annual report that the product of good blanks from ingots operated upon during the last calendar year at the Philadelphia mint was only about 48 per cent, while at San Francisco it reached 54 per cent, and at New Orleans 50.6 per cent.

By reference to a table on page 142 of the report of this Bureau for the fiscal year 1887, you will find that for a series of years the percentage of sovereigns produced at the mint at Melbourne has averaged about 64 per cent, and the percentage of silver produced at the mints at Calcutta and Bombay from $55 \frac{1}{2}$ to 57 per cent.

You will also notice on page 140 of the same report a table giving the percentage of condemned blanks to blanks cut at the various coinage mints of the United States, from which you will see that the percentage

2. - O.C.B.

at Philadelphia is very much higher, - indeed two or three times as high, - as at any of the other mints. The fact is, as is clearly proved from these exhibits, that the work of the mint at Philadelphia in the coiner's department is not up to the standard of the other mints of this country, ~~but~~ far below the standard of foreign mints.

I am sure that you will agree with me that we should endeavor to ascertain the cause of the large number of condemned blanks returned by the Coiner to the Melter and Refiner, and as far as possible remove the causes, whether it results from imperfect machinery, or from imperfect execution of the work.

My judgment is that the percentage of condemned blanks returned to the melter and refiner can, and should be, reduced to at least one or two per cent, and I will afford you all the assistance in my power in accomplishing this end.

With a view to ascertaining the cause of the large number of condemned blanks, and remedy it if possible, I desire to make some observations, not with a view to criticising the mint or the coiner but for the purpose of drawing attention to what has seemed to me to be defects, with the hope of accomplishing better results:

[1]. In the first place it has seemed to me from a casual visit to the coiner's department that the strips are not ~~tested~~ at the draw-bench and that the only use to which the draw-bench is put is to roll the strip

3, - O.C.E.

to the proper thickness of the coin. I take it that this is not the only use for which the draw bench was intended, because that could be accomplished by rolling the ingots to the proper gauge through the rolls. Should not the strips be tested at the draw bench? Would not the time consumed in testing the strips at the draw bench be made up both in expense and results if it prevented the return of a large percentage of condemned blanks to the melter and refiner and also in the remelting of the same.?

[2]. Are the annealing furnaces in ¹first class order? It has seemed to me, without having made any special examination, that you have the best annealing furnaces in your mint of any mint in the United States and that much of the fault lies in improper annealing; that is in lack of uniformity of annealing, some of the strips being annealed too much and others not enough.

[3]. My idea of ^{the head of} a mechanical department is that the officer in charge should be practically acquainted with all the details of the operations, be able to do, theoretically at least, whatever any of his employes do, and that he should spend the major portion of his time in the work rooms seeing that the mechanical operations are being properly conducted. The coiner of the mint, in my judgment, should spend as little time as possible in his office on clerical work, leaving that largely to his clerical assistant, and should spend the larger portion

4, - O.C.B.

of his time in his work rooms seeing that the strips are tested at the draw bench, that they are properly annealed and that the workmen are not allowed to slight this portion of the work.

The trouble with foremen in such work rooms is that they get into a routine and do not seek opportunities to improve the work. Such opportunities must be suggested by the officer in charge.

I would suggest that you direct the attention of the Coiner of the mint to my views on this point and state that I think it for the interest of the Government and of his department that he should spend a large portion of his time in the work rooms, personally supervising the work of his department and seeking opportunities to improve the work.

So far as the work of the coining and cutting rooms is concerned I am very well pleased with it, and, I may say, with the work of the adjusting room, and I think it would be to the interest of your mint if the Coiner would, in connection with yourself and possibly Dr. Tuttle, the Melter and Refiner, who has given some attention to this subject, personally investigate the causes of the large number of condemned blanks and make suggestions or improvements as will remedy it.

I write to you thus fully and freely because I am sure that you are interested as much as I am in producing the very best work in the mint at Philadelphia, and I feel confident that you will render me your personal assistance in remedying the evils complained of.

5, - O.C.B.

The next time I am in Philadelphia I hope to find time to examine in greater detail the mechanical, as well as the metallurgical, operations of the mint, as I desire to have a practical knowledge of all the processes employed in the operative departments of the mint.

Respectfully yours,

E. A. Lusk
Director of the Mint.

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Treasury Dept.
Washington D. C.
Feb'y 20. 1890.

E. W. Leach,
Director

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Feb'y
Rec'd. 21. 1890-

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Respectfully yours, E.O. Leech, Director of the Mint.